



**State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS REGULATION (DBR)
1511 Pontiac Avenue, Bldg. 68-2
Cranston, Rhode Island 02920**

**Division of
Design
Professionals**

**BOARD OF EXAMINERS OF
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

DATE: 27 January 2016
PLACE: 1511 Pontiac Avenue, Building 68-1 Conference Room, Cranston, RI

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Michael Dowhan, Vice-Chair Steven Pilz and Member John Carter
MEMBER ABSENT: Secretary Sara Bradford and Member Margaret E. Ryan

OTHERS PRESENT: Mrs. Dawne Broadfield, Board Executive
Macky McCleary, DBR Director – (Present from 2:19 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.)
Katherine P. Adams – (Present from 2:52 p.m. – 2:59 p.m.)

(1) **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Dowhan called the meeting to order at 2:19 p.m.

(2) **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)**

Chair Dowhan moved to approve the 18 November 2015 open meeting minutes as written. Vice-Chair Pilz seconded. Motion passed, three (3) in favor, two (2) absent. Voting in favor were Chair Dowhan, Vice-Chair Pilz and Member Carter. Secretary Bradford and Member Ryan were absent from this vote.

(3) **APPLICATIONS**

LA Application by Exam

1. Nicholas Charles DiGiando – Requesting clarification of the experience requirement to become registered in the State of Rhode Island.

The Board will send a reply letter to Mr. DiGiando indicating that if Atlantic Lawn and Garden offers Landscape Architecture services in the State of Rhode Island, Atlantic Lawn and Garden would require a Certificate of Authorization (COA) and that his work experience obtained under the direct control and supervision of the licensed landscape architect in which his COA indicates will be acceptable to the Board.

LA Application by Reciprocity

1. Michael D'Angelo

Vice-Chair Pilz moved to approve the reciprocity application for Michael D'Angelo. Member Carter seconded. Motion passed, three (3) in favor, two (2) absent. Voting in favor were Chair Dowhan, Vice-Chair Pilz and Member Carter. Secretary Bradford and Member Ryan were absent from this vote. Reciprocity applicants are no longer required to take the Rhode Island State Supplemental Exam (RI SSE).

LA Certificate of Authorization (COA)

1. Charles Earl Landscape Architecture

2. Rojas Design, Inc.

Vice-Chair Pilz moved to accept and conditionally approve the applications for Charles Earl Landscape Architecture and Rojas Design, Inc. pending receipt of a Certificate of Good Standing from the Rhode Island Secretary of State's office. Chair Dowhan seconded. Motion passed, three (3) in favor, two (2) absent. Voting in favor were Chair Dowhan, Vice-Chair Pilz and Member Carter. Secretary Bradford and Member Ryan were absent from this vote.

(4) **OLD BUSINESS**

1. **Rules and Regulations** - Document for finalization – This was continued.

2. **Certificate of Authorization (COA) - Draft Information Bulletin** – Chair Dowhan will incorporate the changes into the draft for the next meeting. This will be a notification of the responsible charge requirement and who has the responsibility when there is a change in responsible charge. When finalized, it will be e-mailed to all active registered Landscape Architects and posted on the Board's website. The outcome of the DBR LEAN Kaizen Event resulted in the elimination of COAs. Further evaluation is ongoing per DBR Director.

3. **Certificate of Authorization (COA)** – Changes to be made to the Initial and Renewal Application – The outcome of the DBR LEAN Kaizen Event resulted in the elimination of COAs. Further evaluation is ongoing per DBR Director.
4. **Certificate of Authorization (COA)** – Responsible Charge Audit – The outcome of the DBR LEAN Kaizen Event resulted in the elimination of COAs. Further evaluation is ongoing per DBR Director.
5. **RI State Supplemental Exam (RI SSE)** – The Board decided that the RI SSE will remain and will codify the study materials. The Board was notified by the DBR Director that commencing on November 5, 2015, Rhode Island will no longer require successful completion of a Rhode Island specific supplement Exam for licensure as a Landscape Architect. The Board felt that the RI SSE is a “necessary standard” to meet the minimum requirements. Effective at this meeting, all references to the RI SSE will be removed from the website. The RI SSE is no longer required for reciprocity applicants and is temporarily being waived for initial licensure applicants, unless and until the Board comes up with a solution that is satisfactory to the DBR Director.

DBR Director Macky McCleary met with the Board for discussion of the RI SSE.

Vice-Chair Pilz gave an update on his research on the electronic administering of the SSE exam. Vice-Chair reached out to five (5) firms. He received one (1) quote which consisted of taking the exam content and formatting it into a format that can be administered electronically at a local testing site, creating a roster and reporting to the Board as well as the Board verifying exam candidates back to the testing company. This initial quote is \$10,500 upfront, and going forward, the yearly cost would be approximately \$7,000. This quote was based on multiple choice. There would be an additional cost to add fill-in questions. The cost to the exam candidate is \$75. If the fee was bumped up, it would get costly.

After discussion with DBR Director McCleary, the following outcomes are noted:

- As to the SSE, there is further question about the SSE being available more frequently. All agreed that the administering at a test center twice a year does not work from a delivery of services point of view.
- As to Reciprocity Registration, the Board would review and approve reciprocity applications to from individuals holding a valid license in other states, provided that the applicant’s qualifications meet the requirements of 5-51-7. It would be presumed that the applicants have working knowledge of local practice, regulatory, zoning, and permitting requirements. The Board recommends that applicants submit a Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards (CLARB) Certificate, though this is not a requirement.

The immediate “to dos” are noted:

- For the reciprocity applicants, the Board recommended to entertain a vote under New Business to no longer require the SSE.
- For the SSE, the Board will redefine the scope of the testing service so that the SSE is administered securely, is available online all the time such as through “survey monkey” or “internet quizzes,” and would be feasible.
- If testing services by a vendor is not feasible, an option may be that the Board Executive send the SSE via e-mail to the applicant. The applicant will then complete it and send it back to the Board.

The Board will continue more research on administering the SSE. This is continued.

(5) **NEW BUSINESS**

- I. Katherine P. Adams - Requesting clarification of the experience requirement to become registered in the State of Rhode Island. (Present 2:52 p.m. – 2:59 p.m.)

The Board reviewed Ms. Adams’ question and asked the Board’s Legal Counsel for a legal opinion. The Board replied to Ms. Adams that provided that the numbers that she submitted are accurate, there is nothing in the law or rules and regulations that indicates experience needs to be paid or that she needs to be a full-time employee, or not a sub-contractor, under the direct control and supervision of the person in responsible charge. The Board does not see any issue on counting those hours. The experience requirement is that she needs to have a minimum of 10 hours a week and a maximum of 35 hours a week. Ms. Adams calculated her hours and the Supervising Landscape Architect that she works under must verify the supervision of her hours. The Board referred her to the professional “EXPERIENCE FORM” on the Board’s website.

Ms. Adams also asked for clarification as to whether or not the L.A.R.E. passed exam sections ever expire. The Board referred her to CLARB. Ms. Adams spoke with CLARB. CLARB responded that they do not have an exam expiration date but advised her to check with the State for a state requirement. The Board referred Ms. Adams to its Rules and Regulations, Section 3.A.6, and CLARB’s timeline.

2. Mark Butler, Matunuck Design Group, Inc. Requesting if a person can accrue hours towards getting his license if he is unpaid with the person's services used sporadically in production of plans, graphic presentations, drafting and detailing.

Based on response from the Board's Legal Counsel, the Board will send a response to Mr. Butler that the 2 year "experience requirement under §5-51-4(a)(2) does not require that the experience be paid.

3. Next Meeting – 24 February 2016.

4. Reciprocity Administrative Approval

Chair Dowhan moved that applicants for reciprocity whose applications meet all of the State's requirements for licensure and they hold an active CLARB Certificate, those applicants can be administratively approved without the need to take the RI SSE. If there are issues with the application, flagged by the Board Executive, that application will be brought before the full Board. If there are no issues and everything is in order, those applicants will be administratively approved. Any reciprocal applicants that do not have a CLARB Certificate will automatically be brought to the full Board and will not be administratively approved. Vice-Chair Pilz seconded. Motion passed, three (3) in favor, two (2) absent. Voting in favor were Chair Dowhan, Vice-Chair Pilz and Member Carter. Secretary Bradford and Member Ryan were absent from this vote.

Certificate of Authorization (COA) Administrative Approval

Chair Dowhan moved to grant the Board Executive administrative approval for COAs provided that the COA application meets all of the State's requirements of the laws and rules and regulations. Any deviations from that will be brought to the full Board. Vice-Chair Pilz seconded. Motion passed, three (3) in favor, two (2) absent. Voting in favor were Chair Dowhan, Vice-Chair Pilz and Member Carter. Secretary Bradford and Member Ryan were absent from this vote.

(6) CORRESPONDENCE

1. CLARB – Member Board E-News – December 2015 – So noted.
2. RIASLA (Rhode Island American Society of Landscape Architects) – Chapter News – November – December 2015. So noted.

(7) ADJOURNMENT

Chair Dowhan moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:00 p.m., Vice-Chair Pilz seconded. Motion passed, three (3) in favor, two (2) absent. Voting in favor were Chair Dowhan, Vice-Chair Pilz and Member Carter. Secretary Bradford and Member Ryan were absent from this vote.